601 Fire 6 (19 to 22). --The chief, or rather, it seems, the shaman of
621 group c, is 30 to 40 years old, "brother" of c23. His dispositions are
[759] friendly and mysterious. We shall encounter him farther on (2). He

2. P. 103.

has two wives, c19 and [54] c21, very pretty girls of 17 or 18 years, "sisters" of the dead husband of c23. Here we have, then, a good example of sororal polygyny. The second woman has a little boy of 3 years, C22.

Fire 7 (23 to 25). --The woman, c23, is over 40; she is a widow and seems to enjoy great consideration. Her numerous "brothers" provide for her as well as her children, and like C20, she is apt to receive supernatural revelations (1). She has a son, C25, about 14

1. Cf. p. 101.

years old, and a daughter, c24, about 10. Concerning them, refer to page 34.

Fire 8 (26 and 27). --A young couple of about 18, whose parents must be dead and whom the elders of the group call "grandchildren."

Fire 9 (28 to 30). --C28, about 25 years, is a "son" of C6; his wife, c29 is older than he (over 40); she is called "daughter" by c19 and c21, although they are by far younger than she; her daughter c30 is about 2 years old.

Fire 10 (31 to 33). --c32, about 40 years old, is a younger sister of c23; she has two daughters: the eldest, c31, about 17, is married; the younger, c33, still a baby. The husband and her son-in-law are absent; they are said to be on a trip together. The group sees to the needs of the two women.

It is suitable to add a visitor to this list, C34, about 30 years old.
[574] He is the brother of c12 and, during his stay, he receives the hospitality of household number 4.

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN INDIVIDUALS

Husbands and Wives

593 To understand well the attitude of the two sexes as concerns one another, it is indispensable to keep in mind the fundamental character

593 of the couple among the Nambikwara. It is the economic and psycho-
593 logical unit par excellence. Not only among errant bands which are
182 made and unmade unceasingly does the couple appear as the only
462 stable reality (at least theoretically), but it is the couple alone which assures the subsistence of the members of the group. The Nambikwara live under a double economy: the economy of hunters and gardeners on one hand, the economy of collectors and gatherers on the other. The first is assured by the man, the second by the woman. While the masculine group departs for a whole day to hunt, armed with bows and arrows, or works in the gardens during the rainy season, the women, armed with digging implements, wander with their children across the plain, and gather, pull out, pick, capture, seize [55] everything on their route that is worthy of serving as food: grain, fruits, berries, roots, tubers, eggs, small animals of all sorts. At the end of the day, the couple meets around the fire. When the manioc
[252] is ripe, and as long as it remains so, the man brings a bundle of roots which the women pound and press to make a kind of pancake (uridnosu, a1), and when the hunt has been fruitful, they rapidly cook pieces of small animals by burying them under the burning cinders of the family fire. But for seven months of the year, manioc is rare. As for the hunt, it is most often a matter of chance in these sterile sands
[137] where a skinny small animal hardly ever leaves the shade, and the pasture lands at the heads of rivers are separated from one another by considerable stretches of semi-desert brush. Thus, the family
[241] must most often subsist on the collection of the women. Very often we have attended (and sometimes shared) these diabolical doll-size snacks which, for the Nambikwara, for half the year, are the only hope of not dying of hunger. When the man, silent and fatigued, re-
[262] turns to camp and throws his bow and arrows which he could not use to one side, from the basket of the woman is extracted an extraordinary and moving collection: some orange fruit from the buriti palm (e2eru, a1, e1t2nde, b1, 2ola, c), two fat poisonous spiders (korai'su, a1, kut3nde, b1), some tiny lizards' eggs and some of these animals (katãterisu, a1, nagãde, b1, talĩme, c), a bat, some small nuts from the bacaiuva palm (arookesu, a1, lok3ninde, b1), or uaguassu (aradikisu, a1), a handful of grasshoppers (takedasu, a1, tagere,
[252] b1, taãki, c). The pulpy fruits are crushed with the hands in a calabash filled with water, the nuts cracked with the blows of a stone, the animals and larvae buried pell-mell in the coals; and this repast is gaily devoured, a meal which would not be sufficient to satisfy the hunger of a white person, but which feeds a family here.

593 182 462 The conversation becomes animated and laughter spreads. In the dark prairie the camp fires burn. Around the fire, the only protection against the cold which descends, behind the frail windbreak of palms [342] and branches hastily planted in the ground on the side where wind or [415] rain is expected; near the baskets filled with poor objects which constitute their whole earthly treasure; lying on the ground which extends around, haunted only by other bands equally hostile and fearful, the couples, embracing tightly, are truly seen as the support of one another, the comfort, the only help against the daily difficulties and the dreamy melancholy invades the Nambikwara soul from time to time. The visitor who camps in the brush with the Indians for the first time feels tenderness as well as anguish and pity before the spectacle of this humanity so completely unprotected; crushed, apparently against the soil of a hostile land by some implacable cataclysm; naked, shivering around the hesitant fires. He circulates tip-toe among the underbrush, in the dark, avoiding crushing in his walk a hand, an arm, a trunk, whose warm reflections are seen by the light of the fires. But this misery is animated by whispering and laughter. [56] The couples clasp one another as in the nostalgia of a lost union. Their caresses, at the same time tender and candid, are not interrupted by the passage of the stranger. One senses in all [157] of them an immense gentleness, a profound carelessness, a naive and charming animal satisfaction, and, emanating from all that, something like the most moving and credible expression of human tenderness.

593 831 462 562 [517] Thus it is not surprising that the attitude of the two sexes as concerns one another is characterized by intense interest. This interest is translated in certain cases by the vocabulary. In fact the Nambikwara have only one word to express "pretty" and "young," and a single word to signify "ugly" and "old" (munjene, je?ene, bl). Their esthetic judgments are thus based essentially on human considerations, and above all, sexual ones. But the interest which is manifested between the sexes is of a complex nature. Men judge women in a mass, as being a little different from themselves. Depending on the situation, they consider them with desire, admiration, or tenderness. In itself the confusion of terms pointed out above constitutes permanent homage. But it must not be forgotten that the form of economic adaptation realized by sexual division of labor a capital role attributes to the women, since family life rests to a very large degree (probably the greatest) on the collecting of the women, but it represents an [83] inferior type of activity. The ideal life is conceived on the model of agricultural production or hunting. To have plenty of manioc, and

593 831 462 [83] 562 fat pieces of meat is a constantly relished dream, even though rarely realized. On the other hand, the provisions haphazardly collected are considered—and really are—the daily misery. In Nambikwara folklore, the expression "to eat grasshoppers" (tagare ụ̈rige, bl), a typically feminine and infantile harvest, is nearly equivalent to the French "to eat the mad cow" (to rough it). At the same time the woman is considered a tender and good being, but of the second [198] order. The language which she uses habitually separates her from the men and unites her with the children (in the same way that she collaborates with the children in expeditions of collecting and gleaning). We shall see later that this assimilation also continues into the metaphysical thinking and that, on this latter plan, discrimination between the sexes attains proportions whose psychological attitudes are only a derisive indication. It is considered well-bred for men to speak of women with a pitying good will, and, in conversations between the two sexes, to address them with a slightly mocking indulgence. Certain sayings are heard often among men speaking among themselves:

[538] 5. ụ̈rtnoŝunatukhne ioʔotnuŝutnãdnịani deneŝunatukhne. (bl)
The children do not know, I know, the women do not know.

and they bring up the group of women (dosu, al), their jokes, their conversations, with a tone of tenderness and mockery. But, of course, that is only [57] a social attitude. When the man finds himself alone with his wife around the camp fire, he listens to her complaints, considers her demands attentively, asks her help in a hundred undertakings. The male line of talk disappears, and gives way to the collaboration of two partners conscious of the essential value which they have for one another.

198 562 This ambiguity of male attitude as regards women has its exact correspondence in the equally ambivalent behavior of the female group. The women think of themselves collectively, and manifest it in several ways. In the first place they do not talk like the men. Even though a sexual language does not exist in the true sense of the word, in conversation a thousand inflections, shades of pronunciation are found which are typically feminine. Women articulate badly and affect a sort of jabbering which is reminiscent of infants' pronunciation. They whisper instead of talking out loud, and emit sounds with an affected mannerism and preciosity which are at times seductive when they are not exasperating. Thus, in dialect al, they give words an ending —ŝu instead of the usual—su or —tu. They also pronounce—kititu, the verbal suffix which is for men, —kedjutu or —kedjuzu.

601 The Indians do not seem to perceive
602 the specific nature of certain inter-individual relationships except in
[573] the case of relationships of stepmother and stepfather, as will be seen farther on. Nevertheless, the very great liberty which reigns between a man and his wife on one hand, and his brothers-in-law on the other, contrasts greatly with the more serious and dull character of his dealings with his sisters or his (theoretical) wives. This reserve goes to the point of forbidding the verbal expression of the relationship of potential spouses among the children to a certain degree. In the
[124] course of our interrogations, we have always found it difficult to obtain an answer from the interested parties themselves or from their close relatives when the relationship was that of husband and wife (1).

1. The Indian questioned answers that he "does not know" or changes the subject of conversation.

However, there was no case where the exact answer was not given after several evasive words, or an affectation of ignorance, or an attitude of ill will. But however slight the prohibition (the exact information seems to be considered rather as an impropriety or an
[858] indelicacy), it is no less odd because of it, since children classed as potential spouses behave often, and very openly, as such, without anyone objecting to it.

595 Several times we have alluded to polygamy, concrete examples
462 of which were analyzed on the occasion of the study of the kinship systems. Among the Nambikwara, polygamy represents a general tendency limited by the quantity of available women, and a prerogative existing among the chiefs of the groups, the shamans, or outstanding personalities. From this point of view, it springs from the study of command, and we shall return to this when this problem is tackled. Whenever it exists, polygamy is not a substitute for monogamous marriage, it is added to it without suppressing it. An individual begins by marrying one single woman, and upon the occasion of his social advancement, or of happy occasions, it is suitable for him to add some companions. But a very clear distinction, even though it is not sanctioned by the vocabulary of kinship (2), is

595
601 2. To characterize the functions of the first wife, an informant (A6) once used the term asiẽtu ãꞌoyerelisu (a1); to designate the supplementary wives, another informant (B1) mentioned a form nukẽnãjtere, which could be a feminine of nukẽnãjore (b1), "companion," a term which the chief uses to designate the men of his group. But the

833 lively jubilation. Comments are exchanged, jokes made, and even the young children share in the excitement whose motive they are well acquainted with. Sometimes even a small group of men, young women and children, take off in pursuit of the couple and watch the details of the operation through the branches, whispering among themselves and muffling their laughter. The principal actors do not appreciate these goings on at all. However, it is better to take part in them as well as to suffer the taunts and mockeries which greet their return to camp. It also happens that a second couple follows the example of the first and seeks, in their turn, the solitude of the bush. The Indians know and use two positions for coitus. We were not able to find out if they are practiced indiscriminately or if the choice depends on a rule. Whatever the case, besides the posterior position (toãtelosu, a1; inkɔ̃lékenore, b1--to copulate from the rear) so frequent in South America, another position (uataʔãdige, b1) can be described as follows: the woman on her back, the man facing her, the right leg only between the legs of the woman and the left leg outside, so that the two superimposed bodies give the general form of an X.

[66] PARENTS AND CHILDREN

593 163 847 The Nambikwara have few children. Couples without children are not rare, one or two children seem to be a normal number, and it is exceptional to find more than three in a household. Sexual prohibitions and the economic conditions on which they are based which also give rise to abortions, explain this situation. Apparently also Nambikwara formerly had the custom of beating to death the children whose mothers died during childbirth. According to the informants, this practice has been abandoned today.

853 855 The mother gives the breast lying on her side with the child pressed against her. These feedings have no fixed time. The child nurses when he wishes and as much as he wishes. Weaning takes place towards the end of the first year, but up to the age of two or three the infant returns from time to time to the maternal breast.

[514] When a child eliminates at the camp site or inside the hut, the father or mother carefully buries the excrement by digging a small hole which is quickly filled with dry sand. A great deal of care is taken to prevent the children from soiling the camp site and the objects placed near them:

855 8. ụ̈erisekihĩ́ndage numĩ́ sekɔ̈lajene élamnihĩ́ɔ̈ (b1)
863 The child has urinated! the hide! he is dirty! throw out(the urine)!

Later, when the child can isolate himself but not yet clean himself up, he is seen returning on all fours to his mother and remaining in that position while she applies the small twig in the way that has been previously described.

142 All children seem to have a pigmented blotch at birth to which
856 no particular belief is attached. The informants only mention the phenomenon with that positive and detached attitude so striking on their part:

9. ụ̈ĩ́tte ʂ̂edeʂ̂edédnege tõodaɣige ka̱ ka̱ ka̱ ụ̈udérige (b1)
the children marked with green are born, one day, one day, one day, it disappears.

The disappearance of the blotch actually seems to be very rapid.

593 One should, naturally, distinguish true parentage and classificatory
602 parentage. The child does not adopt any particular form of conduct
609 towards his "fathers" and "mothers" in the classificatory sense of the word. He treats them like other adults of the group. Often, furthermore, an individual calls a boy or girl much younger than himself father or mother (thus a19 and a20 are "mothers" of A6 and A24).
[597] When an orphan is taken in by a parallel uncle or aunt, the classificatory parents take the place of true parents, and consequently the
[601] conduct changes. In general, the Indians do not use [67] a term to distinguish classificatory parents and children from blood ones. When seeking precision, they add the word tauẽttu (a1), tauẽtte (b1): "my little one," to the term for son or daughter (a?kiraru, a?kineru), whose connotation seems thus to be social first of all. The physiological acceptance of this springs from the fact that the word is also used to designate the young of animals, other terms being reserved for relationships of parentage in the human family.

855 The Nambikwara feel very real affection for their children, and
157 show it as regards them, and they are repaid in turn. But these sentiments, however real and profound they may be, are often masked behind the nervousness and instability so characteristic of indigenous conduct. Also, as the following example will show, the risk is to let oneself be fooled by apparent indifference, and even momentary rudeness.

Little A16 suffers from indigestion; he has a headache, vomits, passes half the time groaning and the other half sleeping. He is ill, (intikãtu, a1), but no one, parents included, pays the least attention,

854 11. kalajodné daẽ joʔdnoherẽ (b1)
Take it from the front! Take it from the back!

Or else, amidst great bursts of laughter, she takes the child and pretends to be going to throw him to the ground:

12. ãmdam nõm tebũ nihiɰi (b1)
(The mother) "I am going to throw you!" (the child) "I don't want to!"

855 Reciprocally, the children surround their mother with a tenderness
●593 that is demanding and sometimes unquieting. At the time of leaving group b1, we jokingly proposed to a little girl (b5) that we take her with us. Her response was very characteristic, and at the same time similar to that which many other children would have made under the same circumstances:

13. hõdnjẽ odengenãhien ʃuadaʔien tanãhnãdaje. (b1)
No! I don't want to go! I am afraid! Mama would cry!

And another observation also makes evident the affection which is always present on the part of the child: a father (C20) brings wild honey and begins by giving some to his son (C22), and only then to his wife (c21); the child worried, watches his father's movements to see if his mother will receive her share.

[862] During the period which precedes weaning, the child lives in as
855 great intimacy with his father as his mother. Like the latter, the
593 father takes care of him, holds him in his arms, wipes up his excrement when necessary, etc. Later, the child lives closer to his mother. She carries him on trips till he can walk, and later he walks at her side. He remains with her at camp or village while his father goes hunting. However, the proprieties of relationships depend first of all on the sex of the child. A father shows more interest in his son than in his daughter, since he must teach him the masculine techniques and occupations: and the same thing is true concerning relationships of a mother and daughter. But as a whole, the relationships of the father with his children show the same
[842] tenderness and solicitude that we have previously mentioned. The father plays with his child while carrying him on his shoulder (alakuiriginare, b1). He makes weapons to fit the size of the child's little arms:

14 mifnde tauirẽtnore ikɔlaagetire (b1)
The father makes arrows for the child.

736 [69] Concerning a young male orphan, nearly an adolescent, it was said to us one day that "he does not go hunting because he has no father to make him a bow." In certain cases, the father must extend his care and, to a certain degree, substitute for the absent

[734] wife. We have already cited the case of the two little girls
593 a8 and a9 whose stepmother (a7) refuses to take care of them.
Their father (A6) must, then, assume many of the lesser func-
[842] tions. At the time of departure for a trip, it is he who prepares
the basket for the elder, measures on her the length of the tump
line, and shortens it thanks to the free end which he fastens
passing it several times through the holes of the basket-work.
869 It is also the father who tells the children the traditional stories.
538 And, with a view to shortening and making more intelligible
these often long and repetitious accounts, he applies himself
to transposing them in a style especially adapted for children.
Thus, the infant's version of the story of the Flood (1) is as

1. See below, p. 120, the complete version of this story.

follows:

15. yaitento dohonenŝiram kanaram hepatnẽ atatene
yeidenkjathattene yafndənle. (b1)
Everyone was dead! There was no one left! Not a man!
Everyone was dead! Nothing more!

595 Relationships of a particular nature exist in the case of
571 polygamous marriage between the children of the first wife and
their young stepmothers. Even though the latter are called
"mother" or of "sister of the mother" by them, they live in a
state of companionship with them, especially with the girls,
which also extends to all the children of the group. We have
already dwelled on this society of girls and young wives who
take collective baths, go to defecate in a group, smoke to-
gether, joke and give themselves over to rather farfetched games,
such as spitting long jets of saliva in one another's face. An-
other example: a3 and a4 play with their stepdaughter a5. One
of them pushes her and throws her to the ground with such
violence that her head cracks against the ground and the little
one begins to shriek. The two young women heap mockeries
upon her. Finally, the youngest goes to drag her from the
ground almost by force and pushes her toward her mother, with-
out ceremony, like a package. These relationships are close,
appreciated, but without courtesy, like those which young boys
might have in our society. They rarely imply service or atten-
tion. Thus, A1 and his polygamous wives a3 and a4 divide a

857 iõndage ʃutẽnturu kajãno kajãn kajãn hõte kajãnde ʃutentere kuaikʒno (b1).

When I am big, I shall catch the caetetu, caetetu, caetetu, the monkey, the caetetus, I shall kill them when it (the dog) barks.

[868] She makes an error in grammar which the father points out
857 laughingly: she should have said tilõdage, "when I am big,"
154 instead of the masculine form she used. The error is interesting, placed in context, which manifestly shows a feminine desire to raise the economic activities reserved for that sex to the level of those which are the men's privilege. As the exact sense of ʃutẽntere is "to kill by beating with a stick or club" (here, the digging stick), the informant tries unconsciously to identify [71] feminine collecting and gathering (which can only aim at the capture of small animals) with the masculine hunt, armed with bow and arrows.

●593 The relationships between brothers and sisters have not given rise to any particular observation. In the central and southern group, one finds a special expression to designate the brother of the same sex, nlaõre, "the other one"; this term is not only applied to kinship relationships, but also designates objects be-
[342] longing to the same type. Thus the five or six poles planted obliquely which fan out from the center, and which hold up the
[534] first skeleton of the hut, are called indeleaore; likewise, the double (kalõde) or triple (lutəndione) pipes or whistles. Friendly
857 groups are said to be "brothers" (1) also, and in discussions

1. See p. 92.

between adversaries they use the exclamation:

17. kakõtiane tãkənaãtiane (b1).

Wicked one! You are no longer my brother!

[192] which indicates that among the Nambikwara the term "brother" has the same wide sense which it possesses in our vocabulary.
857 But in the heart of the infantile society, numerous attitudes take
182 form which prepare or advance later relationships. The orphan baby a9 spends nearly the whole day in the hands of her young sister a8 (one is 2 to 3 years old, the other 6 to 7). Her sister takes care of her, carries her, feeds her. a19 and a20 (who are "mothers") act like elders toward these two children, in a way more marked than the real difference in age calls for. In fact, a8 and a20 are contemporaries. The eldest, a19, cracks bacaiuva

[End Plate VII]

517
516
855
142
302
301

Family life: The woman a22 and her baby a23 in a state of ease (cf. p. 106 ff.).

756
593
301
142

The shaman of group c (C20) plays with one of his two wives (c21).

627 The chief admon-
[622] ishes quarrelsome individuals but appears to have no powers of coercion. The Wakitîau claim that individuals quarrel but they do not fight among themselves nor do they remember any cases of murder. Unwanted individuals are exiled by common agreement. Houses, fields, and some implements are common property, and food is shared among the members of the band. Axes, machetes, and knives, although owned by individuals are freely used by other members. At death, privately owned tools pass to a man's sons or to his brother. The bow is customarily broken and left on the grave. Even these rules are not strictly adhered to, for when a man becomes seriously ill other men begin to help themselves to his property and the one with the "strongest mouth" gets the most. If the man recovers he cannot reclaim his things but must set about accumulating a new supply.

543 The wife and the children are under the strict control of the husband. Although boys must obey their fathers they owe no special obedience to their mothers. Boys sometimes throw stones and sticks at their mothers and the old women; the older men not only laugh but even encourage this disobedience. The bond between brothers is very close. On occasion they share each other's wives. No particular respect is paid to in-laws.

RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND PRACTICES

774 According to the Wakitîau the spirits are the source of all danger, misfortune, sickness, and death. The ghosts of the dead (*aydohadiw*), bring sickness unless offerings of food are made to them. The ghosts of dead shamans (*awánaw*), belonging to other bands bring thunderstorms which destroy gardens and make hunting difficult. In addition to the ghosts, there is *tsuyté*, the hawk of death who lives in the sky, and *ulwrú*, the evil armadillo who lives under the ground and wants to destroy the villages and camps of the Nambicuara.

Tsuyté is an enormous hawk with huge wings, tail, and claws, who sits in a tree made of human bones. This tree (*Idéhuteu*) is situated on the shore of a shallow lake in the sky. Shooting stars are caused by *tsuyté* defecating at night. A small red bird (*dintsuwa*), who lives with *tsuyté*, urinates into the lake and when it fills up the urine overflows and comes down in the form of rain.

[p. 99 (8)]

535 The circling began at seven o'clock in the evening, with continuous chanting. The girls, not once deviating from their course, left regular marks on the dusty ground which were clearly visible in the moonlight. They seemed always to step in the footprints of the first round. Midnight. Near the fires lit by every family, the old people slept; some muttered and poked the embers which gleamed like scattered rubies. Within the circle, perspiring, covered with dust, more dead than alive, we all joined in the chorus: "Tagnaní-ü! Tagnaní-ü! Tangrê!"

Thus it went on all night. Whenever one of us fled and repaired to his hammock, two or three big husky fellows would come talking volubly, and drive the deserter back to his place...

[521] Unfortunately the words of those chants were not recorded. We only know the two words cited: tagnani, the name of the tribe, tangre, which means "star." Was this astrolatry? The three central figures of this dance, in the course of which stars were mentioned, brought to my mind [255] the beautiful constellation of Orion with its Três Marias ["Three Maries"--the Belt].

533 I recorded two Cocozu musical pieces which are rendered here [pp. 73-74]. Prof. Astolpho Tavares has transcribed them into musical notation.

[Fig. 34]

The scale [diapasão] of Nambicuara music is about half a tone lower than our normal scale.

The notes used in the recorded pieces are: do^1, mi^{2b}, fa^2, $fa^{2\#}$, sol^2, la^2. Neither re nor si appear.

The recorded pieces are in la flat major shifting to mi flat minor (Recording No. 1), and in mi minor (Recording No. 2).

The musical motifs develop in two-part time.

184 The Serra do Norte Indians present two distinct kinds of social organization. From this standpoint, the Tagnani and Tawite are more advanced than the Cocozu and Anunze.

593 The latter live under a patriarchal regime: the father rules the [511] family, which is often monogamous. The children, after puberty, start new families according to their own wishes [à vontade] and continue to revere their progenitors.